

# Seeing Sociology

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A Guide for Students Enrolled in SOC  
280/Introduction to Sociology  
(In-Person Fall 2012 Edition)

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For this assignment, you will be required to take a photograph that illustrates a sociological concept and include a sociologically-rich and tweetable description of the photo. This guide provides you all the details of the assignment, answers to frequently asked questions, and examples of the assignment.

## PURPOSE

### *Why photographs?*

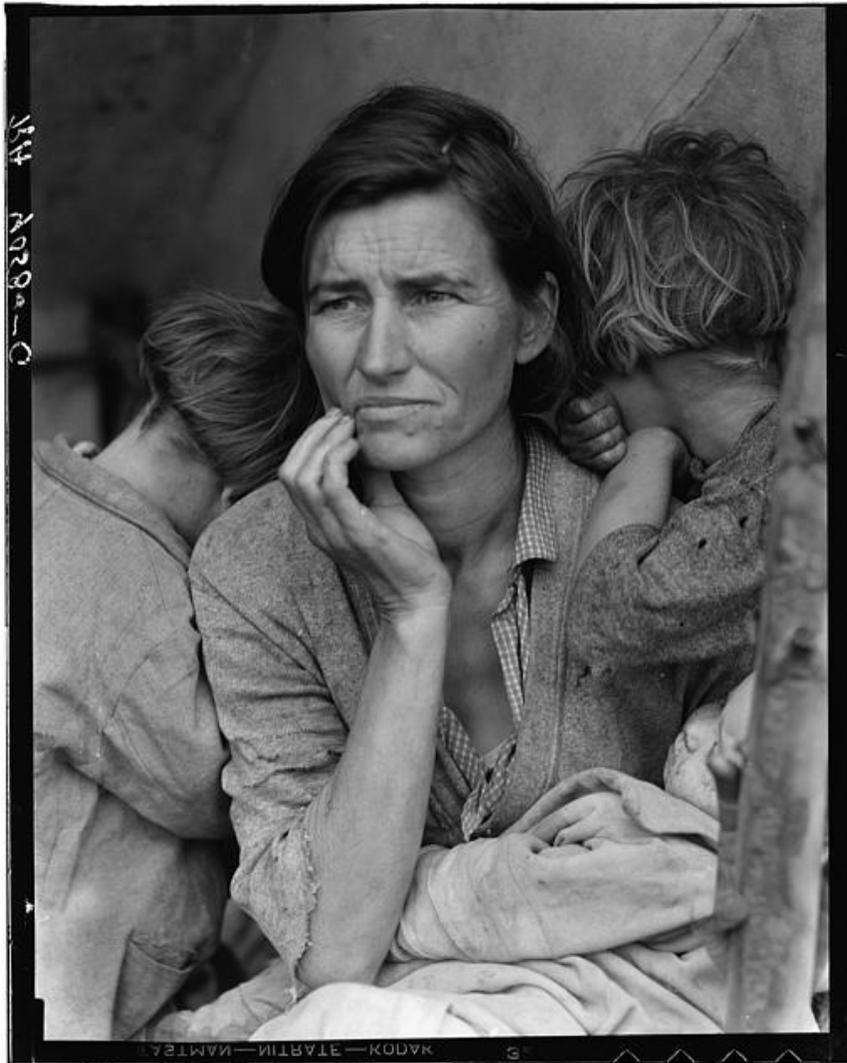
Sociology is all around us and photographs are an excellent way to communicate (sociological) information. For example, take a look at this photo:



(source: <http://politicalhumor.about.com/library/images/blkatrinalooting.htm>)

These two photos have two very different captions. The photos came from different photographers. The captions came from different writers. Each image/caption came from a different press. The images alone communicate something about disaster. Paired with the caption, they communicate something about race, disaster, and crime. Paired together, they communicate racism in the media.

Take a look at another image:



(source: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8b29516/>)

This photo of migrant farm workers during the Great Depression was taken by Dorothea Lange in 1936. This woman was 32-years-old and a mother of seven children. This photo communicates poverty, desperation, motherhood, family, how childhood has changed, and so on.

### *Why tweets?*

Twitter is a fast growing social network that allows users to share something with the world in 140 characters or less. The point is to share very tiny bits of information while communicating a great deal. The challenge is to communicate as much as you can in this limited amount of space. We live in a culture full of people with short attention spans feeding on sound-bites so we need to be able to communicate a lot of information in tiny bits (okay, that's a bit of an exaggeration, but you get the idea). (Read more about Twitter: <https://twitter.com/about>). The best way to write your tweetable captions is to write out everything you want to say about your image and then edit. Edit some more. And edit some more. You only have 140 characters to work with.

## THE DETAILS:

### Do I need a Twitter account?

No. If you already have a Twitter account, feel free to share your photos with your classmates via Twitter *in addition to turning your assignment as stipulated on page 6*. If you share your image on Twitter, include the hashtag #SEESOC so the rest of us can find it. You can also tag me @learnsociology (<https://twitter.com/#!/learnsociology>) in your tweet and I will reshare it via my feed.

### Why 140 characters?

This is a limitation of Twitter and a challenge for you. Keep in mind that your limit is 140 characters, not 140 words. Characters include letters, spaces, and punctuation. An example:

**This sentence includes 37 characters.**

*How to determine how many characters you have used?*

1. Highlight your caption.
2. Go to the Review tab in Microsoft word.
3. Click Word Count.
4. Review the fourth item on the list: characters (with spaces). This tells you how many characters you have used.

### What is a sociologically-rich description?

Your tweetable-caption should include direct references to sociological concepts. Use your book and other course materials to help you identify the specific concept or concepts your image portrays. Be specific. Make sure it is clear to me what concept is being illustrated.

### Can I write a one word caption?

Yes, but I wouldn't recommend it. Succinctly make your point, yet make sure your description is sociologically-rich. Tell me as much as you can in as few characters as possible.

*Example 1*



The sociological perspective challenges us to view the world in a new way, similar to looking at Chicago through the mirrored bean.

*Example 2*



Sociologists use quantitative research methods, such as surveying the homeless, to learn about diverse groups in society.

**(Please note that the above images are not my own. They come from W.W. Norton, the publisher of your textbook.)**

### **What exactly will I be turning in?**

You will submit a Word document that includes your image and caption in one file. You will complete this assignment three times, one for each unit:

- a) Seeing Sociology 1 covers chapters 1-6 and is due October 8.
- b) Seeing Sociology 2 covers chapters 7-11 and is due November 7.
- c) Seeing Sociology 3 covers chapters 12-17 and is due December 10.

### **How much is this worth?**

Each submission is worth 15 points. The total points for your Seeing Sociology submissions is 45 points.

### **Where will I turn in my Seeing Sociology assignments?**

Seeing Sociology will only be accepted and graded through Instructure Canvas.

### **How do I add a photo to a word document?**

1. Go to the Insert tab.
2. Click on picture.
3. Find where your photo is saved on your computer.

### **What if I don't have a camera?**

You can use a film camera, a disposable camera, or a camera phone to take your photos. Contact me ([smedleyrath@lakeland.cc.il.us](mailto:smedleyrath@lakeland.cc.il.us)) as soon as possible to make other arrangements if you do not have access to a camera.

### **Can I use a photo I didn't actually take?**

You must take the photo yourself or have permission to use the photo. You can not just download an image from Google images and pass it off as your own work. You can use a photo taken by a family member or a friend, but make sure you have permission to use the photo.

### **Can I use an older photo?**

Yes. The photo does not have to be recent. You can use a photo you already have or you can take a brand new photo specifically for this assignment.

### **Do I need a reference page?**

Include in-text citations and a reference page when appropriate (this means your reference page should have an APA formatted entry for the article, the textbook, and any other references you use). You should follow APA format. More information on APA format can be found at the OWL @ Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Your reference page does not count towards your 140 character count. If you used references and they are not cited, you will lose 2 points off the top.

### Will you grade spelling and grammar?

You better believe it. Spell-check and read over your work before turning it in. You only have 140 characters to work with. There should be no spelling or grammatical errors. Any spelling or grammatical errors will result in a loss of 2 points off the top.

### What else do I need to know about this assignment?

- Refrain from using photographs of nudity, pornography, or obscenity. If you went to a strip club and found the experience illustrates the concept of gender inequality, then take a photo of the sign over the strip club. Be creative, but no photos of people actually stripping.
- If you take photos of people, make sure you have their permission to use their photo in class.
- Keep a back-up copy of your work so you do not lose it. Computer crashes happen. Files get deleted. Back-up your work.
- Make sure your submission is original. What this means is that you are not using a similar photo or concept for each submission. Failure to do this could result in failure on the assignment.

### Can I turn my assignment in late?

No. I will not accept any assignments late under any circumstances. Don't ask. Don't email it to me.

### Want to contribute your photos to a photo library of sociologically focused images?

If you would like to help build a library of sociologically focused images, please share your photo with the Learn Sociology Flickr Group (<http://www.flickr.com/groups/learnsociology/>). Sharing your photo on Flickr is completely optional. By sharing your photo with the Flickr group, you are giving me the right to use your photo in the classroom setting.

### What is the grading rubric for this assignment?

	Possible Points	Points Earned
Is the caption 140 characters or less?	3	
Are the sociological concepts clear?	4	
Is the caption sociologically-rich?	4	
Does the caption accurately reflect the photograph?	4	
<b>Total Earned</b>	15	
<i>Possible Deductions:</i>		
Spelling or grammar errors	-2	
Reference page or in-text citations needed, but not included	-2	
Reference page or in-text citations do not follow APA format	-2	
Does your submission fit within the assigned chapters?	-2	
<b>Total Deductions</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>		

*The Seeing Sociology Guide provides a general plan for the assignment; instructor deviations may be necessary.*